

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 06624 01 OF 02 270007Z

71

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSO-00

DHA-02 IO-13 SCCT-01 ACDA-07 EUR-12 SAM-01 SAB-01

/094 W

----- 024185

R 261347Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1341

INFO AMEMASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USINT BAGHDAD

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 6624

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, PINS, SY, IS

SUBJECT: POLITICAL BALANCE SHEET IN LEBANON AS OF JULY 26, 1976

1. AS I PREPARE TO DEPART LEBANON AFTER APPROXIMATELY FOUR WEEKS AS PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE, I SUBMIT FOLLOWING BALANCE SHEET OF PLUSES AND MINUSES. CRYSTAL-BALL GAZING IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD IS RISKY, BUT AS LIST OF PLUSES SUGGESTS, THERE IS A GOOD POSSIBILITY FOR AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE SITUATION EVEN THOUGH LONG-TERM PROSPECTS FOR REAL AND LASTING STABILITY IN LEBANON ARE EXCEEDINGLY DIM. ALSO INCLUDED ARE TWO PROJECTIONS AS TO HOW EVENTS MAY UNFOLD, EACH PROJECTION PEGGED AT OPPOSITE ENDS OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM OF POSSIBILITIES. ONE IS THE WORST THAT CAN HAPPEN; THE OTHER IS THE "MOST OPTIMISTIC SCENARIO." WHAT ACTUALLY TRANSPIRES WILL NO DOUBT FALL SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN THESE TWO EXTREMES.

2. MINUSES:

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BEIRUT 06624 01 OF 02 270007Z

A. LEBANON HAS SUFFERED TERRIBLY IN MATERIAL AND HUMAN LOSSES,

INCLUDING DEPARTURE FROM COUNTRY OF MOST OF LEADING PROFESSIONALS,  
AND COUNTRY WILL NEVER BE THE SAME AGAIN.

B. THERE IS CONTINUED LACK OF ANY CENTRAL GOVERNMENTAL  
AUTHORITY, AND THERE ARE FORMIDABLE OBSTACLES IN WAY OF RESTORING IT.

C. EXTREMISTS EXERCISE STRONG INFLUENCE ON PLO DECISION-  
MAKING, MAKING IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR ARAFAT TO COMMIT PLO TO  
AN AGREEMENT WITH ASSAD. EXTREMISTS THREATEN TO BRING ABOUT  
RADICALIZATION OF WHOLE PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT.

D. LEBANON IS ARMED TO THE TEETH, WITH FIGHTING, KILLING AND  
RANCOR A NORMAL PATTERN OF LIFE; THIS MAKES RESTORATION OF LAW AND  
ORDER EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT AND WILL LEAVE SOCIAL SCARS.

E. WELL-ARMED REJECTIONISTS AND LEFTIST GROUPS CONTINUE TO  
FUNCTION, IF ANYTHING, STRONGER NOW THAN BEFORE CIVIL WAR.  
TERRORISM COULD INCREASE.

F. MARONITE ATTITUDES TOWARD LEBANESE MOSLEMS AND  
PALESTINIANS SEEM TO BE INCREASINGLY UNCOMPROMISING, AND THUS  
HANDICAP PROCESS OF RECONCILIATION BETWEEN LEBANESE FACTIONS.

G. AS WAR GOES ON, ASSAD REGIME IS INCREASINGLY THREATENED  
FROM WITHIN BY COSTLY AND GENERALLY UNPOPULAR SYRIAN MILITARY  
INTERVENTION INTO LEBANON.(OVERTHROW OF ASSAD COULD HAVE SERIOUS  
REPERCUSSIONS IN LEBANON.)

H. THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT SOVIETS ARE STEPPING UP SUPPLY OF  
ARMS TO PALESTINIANS AND MOSLEM LEFTISTS.

I. DE FACTO MARONITE PARTITION, RESULTING IN FORMATION OF  
SEPARATE ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS, COULD MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT THAN  
EVER TO BRING ABOUT REUNIFICATION OF LEBANON.

J. EVEN IF THERE IS A SUCCESSFUL CEASEFIRE AND POLITICAL  
AGREEMENTS ARE REACHED BETWEEN THE VARIOUS PARTIES, THE CONTINUED  
PRESENCE OF SOME 400,000 DISGRUNTLED PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON WILL  
REMAIN A MAJOR SOURCE OF FRICTION AND FERMENT. IN THE ABSENCE OF A  
SAFETY VALVE--SUCH AS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PALESTINIAN STATE,  
OR SOMETHING ELSE WHICH AT LEAST IN PART SATISFIED PALESTINIAN  
POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS--THE PALESTINIAN PRESSURE COOKER WILL KEEP  
LEBANON FROM ACHIEVING REAL AND LASTING STABILITY.

### 3. PLUSES:

A. ISRAEL RESTRAINT HAS GIVEN SYRIANS THE FLEXIBILITY TO  
STABILIZE THE SITUATION IN LEBANON WITHOUT SERIOUS FEAR OF ISRAELI  
INTERVENTION. (THIS ALSO LIMITS POSSIBILITY OF OUTBREAK OF ARAB-  
ISRAELI WAR, PROVIDED SYRIA DOES NOT OCCUPY SOUTHERN LEBANON.)

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BEIRUT 06624 01 OF 02 270007Z

B. CHANCES OF MOVING AHEAD ON ARAB-ISRAELI PEACE  
SETTLEMENT HAVE NOT BEEN LESSENED; INSTEAD, A SYRIAN SUCCESS IN  
NEUTRALIZING PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON COULD BE HELPFUL IN THIS  
REGARD.

C. DEVELOPING SYRIAN DIFFERENCES WITH SOVIETS OVER  
LEBANON HAVE WEAKENED LONGSTANDING SYRIAN-SOVIET LINKS.

D. THERE IS INCREASED ARAB LEAGUE UNDERSTANDING OF AND,  
IN IMPORTANT INSTANCES, SUPPORT FOR THE SYRIAN POSITION IN LEBANON.

E. PLO IS INCREASINGLY ISOLATED FROM THE ARAB GOVERNMENTS, WITH RELATIVELY UNIMPORTANT EXCEPTIONS OF INEFFECTUAL IRAQ AND ERRATIC QADDAFI. (EGYPT'S SUPPORT FOR PLO IS LARGELY COSMETIC, FLOWING ESSENTIALLY FROM ITS BITTERNESS TOWARD SYRIA.)

F. THERE IS GROWING AWARENESS ON PART OF MODERAT PLO LEADERS OF THEIR WEAKENED MILITARY POSITION WHICH, RATHER THAN CAUSING A BACKLASH, SEEMS TO BE INDUCING PLO TO CUT ITS LOSSES AND MAKE THE BEST DEAL IT CAN WITH SYRIANS--PROVIDED MODERAT PLO LEADERSHIP CAN ESTABLISH PARAMOUNT INFLUENCE WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION (SEE OBVERSE IN PARA C, MINUSES).

G. THERE IS GROWING MOSLEM DISAFFECTION WITH THE PALESTINIANS, MAKING MOSLEMS PERHAPS MORE DISPOSED TO MAKE A DEAL WITH THE MARONITES.

H. THE SYRIAN "BALANCE OF POWER" POLICY IN LEBANON AS BETWEEN MARONITES AND MOSLEMS ONCE KEPT MARONITES FROM GOING UNDER AND, NOW THAT MOSLEMS ARE WEAKER, OFFERS HOPE THAT SYRIANS WILL, IF NECESSARY, REIN MARONITES IN AT RIGHT TIME.

I. POCKETS OF PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE WITHIN MARONITE SECTOR HAVE BEEN LARGELY ELIMINATED, MEETING MARONITE DESIRE FOR A SECURE "REFUGE" AND THUS PERHAPS DIMINISHING DEEP MARONITE CONCERNS AT POSSIBILITY OF BEING OVERWHELMED BY MOSLEMS. THIS SHOULD STRENGTHEN HANDS OF MORE LEVEL-HEADED MARONITE LEADERS, SUCH AS GEMAYEL.

J. HOPEFULLY, AWARENESS BY MARONITES THAT EXISTENCE OF DE FACTO PARTITION PUTS MOSLEMS AT DISADVANTAGE--BECAUSE LATTER HAVE MORE TO LOSE FROM CRYSTALLIZATION OF THIS INTO DE JURTLO SI W NAA#

WILL PERMIT MARONITES TO OVERCOME THEIR PRESENT HARD-LINING APPROACH TO MOSLEMS (SEE OBVERSE IN PARA F, MINUSES).

K. SYRIA, BY ITS BLOCKADE, HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL TO CERTAIN EXTENT IN REDUCING FLOW OF ARMS SUPPLIES TO PALESTINIANS AND LEFTIST MOSLEMS (ALTHOUGH THERE IS EVIDENCE IN PAST WEEK THAT SEVERAL IMPORTANT ARMS SHIPMENTS HAVE ARRIVED).

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 BEIRUT 06624 01 OF 02 270007Z

L. LEBANESE ARE PEOPLE OF INGENUITY, AND THEY HAVE REMARKABLE RECUPERATIVE POWERS. DESPITE TERRIBLE DAMAGE INFLICTED ON THIS COUNTRY, IF PEACE AND UNITY ARE RESTORED, LEBANON COULD BOUNCE BACK BETTER THAN MANY WOULD THINK POSSIBLE.

NOTE BY OC/T: #AS RECEIVED.

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 06624 02 OF 02 262352Z

71

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSO-00

DHA-02 IO-13 SCCT-01 ACDA-07 EUR-12 SAM-01 SAB-01

/094 W

----- 024085

R 261347Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1342

INFO AMEMASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USINT BAGHDAD

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 6624

#### 4. MOST PESSIMISTIC SCENARIO

A. PLO-SYRIAN NEGOTIATIONS BREAK DOWN COMPLETELY. FIGHTING CONTINUES INDEFINITELY ON MANY FRONTS (WITH EXCEPTION OF MARONITE ZONE) AND IN SOME INSTANCES INTENSIFIES. DESPITE REPEATED LOSSES, PLO, REJECTION FRONT AND LEFTISTS--WITH TENS OF THOUSANDS STILL ARMED--REFUSE TO CAPITULATE DESPITE COMBINATION OF MARONITE AND SYRIAN PRESSURES.

B. SYRIANS AND MARONITES, IMPATIENT WITH DRAGGING OUT OF FIGHTING, AGREE THAT MARONITES SHOULD ASSAULT WEST BEIRUT. LEFTISTS AND REJECTIONISTS, CONCENTRATED NEAR DIVIDING LINES, FIGHT TO THE LAST, BUT MOST OF PLO-FATAH (WHICH IS GENERALLY LOCATED FURTHER BACK FROM LINE) GRADUALLY WITHDRAWS FROM WEST BEIRUT AND RETREATS TO WELL-FORTIFIED CAMPS ON OUTSKIRTS.

C. SYRIA CONTINUES TO IMPOSE LIMITED BLOCKADE ON WEST BEIRUT BUT ARMS STILL DRIBBLE IN, WHICH, TOGETHER WITH CACHES OF ARMS ALREADY HELD, HELP SUSTAIN FIGHTING ABILITY OF REJECTIONISTS-LEFTISTS. THUS, DESPITE SOME SUCCESSES IN WEST BEIRUT, MARONITES STILL CONFRONT POCKETS OF STRONG RESISTANCE THERE. CIVIL WAR

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BEIRUT 06624 02 OF 02 262352Z

CONTINUES, ALTHOUGH SHORTAGE OF FUEL HANDICAPS PALESTINIANS AND LEFTISTS.

D. KFOUR FRONT BECOMES MORE UNCOMPROMISING IN FACE OF

STRONG AND PERSISTENT RESISTANCE, AND MARONITES ARE REINFORCED IN THEIR DETERMINATION TO MAINTAIN EXISTING DE FACTO PARTITION. DESPITE GROWING MOSLEM DISAFFECTION FOR PALESTINIANS AND SYRIANS, AND MOSLEM OVERTURES IN DIRECTION OF RECONCILIATION, MARONITES REFUSE TO AGREE TO MAKE ANY CONCESSIONS TO MOSLEMS REGARDING POSSIBLE POLITICAL REFORMS.

E. SYRIAN MILITARY GETS DRAWN IN FURTHER, MOVING INTO PARTS OF BEIRUT AND PERHAPS USING ITS AIR FORCE. EVENTUALLY, FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL COSTS TO ASSAD OF CONTINUED MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN LEBANON BRING ABOUT IMPORTANT CHANGES IN SYRIAN LEADERSHIP. THIS INDUCES SYRIAN POLICY SHIFT TOWARD LEBANON, AT MINIMUM EASING PRESSURES ON THE PALESTINIANS AND AT MAXIMUM SWITCHING SYRIAN SUPPORT FROM MARONITES TO PALESTINIANS AND LEFTIST MOSLEMS. A LEFTIST MOSLEM-PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP COALESCE IN MOSLEM LEBANON AS SYRIANS WITHDRAW TO THE BEKAA.

F. IN LIGHT OF SUCCESS OF RADICALS IN LEBANON, AS WELL AS SYRIAN POLICY SHIFT, ISRAELIS MOVE ACROSS THE BORDER AS FAR AS THE LITANI RIVER, AND THE BALKANIZATION OF LEBANON OCCURS: LEBANON SPLITS INTO SYRIAN, ISRAELI, MARONITE AND MOSLEM-PALESTINIAN SECTORS.

G. THE POSSIBILITY OF AN ARAB-ISRAELI WAR BECOMES ACUTE.

##### 5. MOST OPTIMISTIC SCENARIO

A. CEASEFIRE IS ACHIEVED AS RESULT OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN PALESTINIANS AND SYRIANS, AS WELL AS BETWEEN KFOUR FRONT AND MOSLEMS-PALESTINIANS.

B. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THIS CEASEFIRE INCLUDE:

- (1) A PLO RECOGNITION THAT SUSTAINED LOSSES ON FIELD OF BATTLE, WITH LITTLE PROSPECT FOR TURNING MILITARY TIDE, NECESSITATE MAKING DEAL WITH SYRIANS TO PRESERVE REMAINING ASSETS, BUT ON TERMS WHICH ARE STILL RELATIVELY FAVORABLE TO PALESTINIANS.
  - (2) GROWING MOSLEM DISAFFECTION FOR PALESTINIANS (AND SYRIANS) ACCENTUATES PRESSURES ON PALESTINIANS TO COME TO AGREEMENT WITH SYRIANS.
  - (3) MARONITES, SENSING (A) MOSLEM WEAKNESS AND VULNERABILITY AND (B) SYRIAN FICKLENESS, SEE IT TO THEIR ADVANTAGE TO AGREE TO CEASEFIRE. IN CASE OF (A), MARONITES SEE OPPORTUNITY FOR PERPETRATING MARONITE DOMINATION OF LEBANOESE BODY POLITIC; IN CASE OF (B), THEY
- SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BEIRUT 06624 02 OF 02 262352Z

REALIZE THAT SYRIANS COULD WELL LEAVE THEM IN THE LURCH.

C. ARAB LEAGUE FORCE AGREES TO POLICE CEASEFIRE AND IS DEPLOYED TO KEY LOCATIONS. IN FIRST INSTANCE CEASEFIRE OPENS UP CERTAIN UNENCUMBERED ACCESS ROUTES BETWEEN TWO ZONES, INCLUDING IN PARTICULAR ACCESS ROUTE FROM MARONITE SECTOR TO BEIRUT AIRPORT.

D. WHILE REJECTIONISTS, MURABITOUN AND OTHER LEFTISTS CONTINUE TO OPPOSE CEASEFIRE, THERE IS AGREEMENT BY SIGNATORIES TO CEASEFIRE TO SURROUND AND ISOLATE THEM. (BUT DISSIDENTS AND MYRIAD OF UNDISCIPLINED, ARMED PERSONNEL STILL CAUSE PROBLEMS.)

E. ROUND TABLE TALKS OCCUR BETWEEN LEBANESE FACTIONS.

(1) AGREEMENT IS REACHED ON LINES SOMEWHAT SIMLIAR TO  
FEBRUARY BAABDA DOCUMENT, ACCORDING TO WHICH THERE IS A 50-50  
MOSLEM-CHRISTIAN SHARING OF POWER, BUT POSSIBLY WITHOUT STRENGTHENING

HAND OF SUNNI PRIME MINISTER TO EXTENT CALLED FOR IN THIS  
DOCUMENT.

(2) AGREEMENT IS REACHED TO PERMIT PALESTINIANS TO CONTINUE  
TO FUNCTION INLEBANON UNDER TERMS SIMILAR TO 1969 CAIRO ACCORD  
BUT PRECISELY DEFINED IN MANNER TO CIRCUMSCRIBE MORE EFFECTIVELY  
PALESTINIAN FREEWHEELING. SYRIANS UNDERTAKE GUARANTEE AND ENFORCE  
PALESTINIAN ACQUIESCENCE IN THIS ACCORD.

(3) SYRIANS AGREE, UPON REQUEST OF SARKIS GOVERNMENT, TO  
WITHDRAW TROOPS FROM LEBANON IN STAGES, TO BE RELATED TO PROCESS  
OF REORGANIZATION OF LEBANESE GOVERNMENT, RECONSITUTION OF  
SECURITY FORCES AND RESTORATION OF SECURITY. FINAL WITHDRAWAL  
STAGE (PERHAPS TWO YEARS HENCE) IS WITHDRAWAL OF SYRIAN TROOPS  
FROM THE BEKAA. SYRIANS RETAIN RIGHT TO RE-INTRODUCE TROOPS INTO  
LEBANON IF PALESTINIANS VIOLATE TERMS OF ACCORD (E.2 ABOVE).  
F. AFTER HAVING PROVIDED TRANSITIONAL SECURITY, ARAB LEAGUE  
FORCE DEPARTS.  
SEELYE

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CIVIL DISORDERS, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 26 JUL 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ellisoob  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976BEIRUT06624  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760287-0666  
**From:** BEIRUT  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760723/aaaaatvo.tel  
**Line Count:** 298  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 6  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ellisoob  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 09 JUN 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <09 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <07 OCT 2004 by ellisoob>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** POLITICAL BALANCE SHEET IN LEBANON AS OF JULY 26, 1976  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PINS, LE, SY, IS  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006